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Letter dated 9 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the copy of a letter dated 7 May 2002 from İsmail Cem, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, addressed to you, with regard to the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ümit **Pamir**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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The success of the Bonn process is of crucial importance for attaining lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan. It is important that the international community maintain its vigilant support to make full use of the historic opportunity to meet this challenge. Turkey strongly appreciates the key role played by the United Nations under your able guidance and the valuable contributions of Ambassador Brahimi, your Special Representative for Afghanistan.

I have the pleasure to inform you that the Government of the Republic of Turkey decided on 29 April 2002 to assume the lead nation status for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for Kabul and its surrounding area for a period of six months, following the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Needless to say, Turkey will assume the leadership following the extension of the authorization of the International Security Assistance Force by the Security Council and the six-month period will commence with the actual transfer of the lead to Turkey by the United Kingdom. Turkey expects that a new Council resolution could be expeditiously adopted by the Council for that purpose.

The Turkish Government has taken this decision with the understanding that the mandate and the area of operation of ISAF will be maintained as stipulated by the Security Council in its resolution 1386 (2001). As such, the core mission of ISAF would remain to be of assistance to the Afghan Administration in the maintenance of security as envisaged in annex I to the Bonn Agreement. The following current tasks of the force would also be maintained:

- Liaison with the transitional administration and with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General;
- Advice and support to the transitional administration and to the United Nations and its personnel in Kabul on security issues;
- Scoping future requirements for helping the Afghan authorities in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces; key infrastructure development tasks.

Under the lead of the United Kingdom and with the valuable assistance of contributing States, ISAF has been successful in fulfilling its role. The continuous strong support of the international community is crucial for maintaining the present capabilities and efficiency of ISAF. An early adoption of a new Security Council resolution extending the mandate of ISAF will enable Member States to make concrete and timely contribution plans for the force. Therefore, we look forward to the early adoption of an extension resolution from the Security Council. Your guidance to this end will be highly appreciated.

The Trust Fund established in accordance with resolution 1386 (2001) to provide financial support to ISAF participating States or operations has not yet become functional. Encouragement of the Member States to contribute to the fund will be important, as it constitutes the lifeline of ISAF.

As was the case during the United Kingdom lead, the International Security Assistance Force will continue to have a particular mission authorized by a Security

Council resolution that is distinct from Operation Enduring Freedom. Turkey, as the lead nation, will exercise command of the International Security Assistance Force. It will continue to include the troops and equipment contributed by other nations and will have the support of the United States of America.

In respect of the relationship between the International Security Assistance Force and forces operating in the Afghanistan theatre under Operation Enduring Freedom, and for reasons of effectiveness, close coordination will be maintained between ISAF and the United States Central Command to "deconflict" International Security Assistance Force and Operation Enduring Freedom activities and to ensure that each group's activities do not interfere with the successful execution of the other's.

The joint coordinating body established with representatives from the United States Central Command, the Afghan Interim Administration and the International Security Assistance Force to deal with operational issues will be maintained.

To ensure effective political-military coordination, the committee of contributors will continue to meet with the lead nation as the chair and Turkey, as the lead nation, will report regularly to the Security Council on developments.

The precise date of transfer of the responsibility of the lead from the United Kingdom will be determined through consultations in due course. Following the termination of the six-month period under the Turkish lead, Turkey will transfer its responsibilities. Here I would like to emphasize that the identification of the successor at an early stage will not only enable the timely preparations for the transfer of leadership, but will also serve to boost confidence in the international community's commitment to Afghanistan. Turkey would like to ask you to support efforts to identify a successor lead nation by inviting the Member States to consider the possibility of taking over as the next lead nation.

(*Signed*) İsmail **Cem**